

‘Dialogue in the Dark’

A peep into the world of blind

■ By Kshitij Udar

NAGPUR, Feb 28

HOW is life without vision? What do the visually-impaired feel living in total darkness in a world full of brisk activities? It is said, when one of your senses is compromised the others automatically get elevated to make up for it. The visually-impaired and the blind experience this daily. And a unique concept is set to bring the Orange City denizens face to face with the experiences in the dark world of the blind.

‘Dialogue in the Dark’, stemming from a German concept, is set to give Nagpurians a feel and self-awareness needed to help the people without vision.

Run by a group named Entartica, an entertainment continent which comes under OFFORBY, ‘Dialogue in the Dark’ has made its mark in 40 countries with 150 centres and a whopping 8 million visitors world-wide. Major Indian cities including Hyderabad, Chennai, Bengaluru and capital of Chhattisgarh, Raipur are among the few to have operating centers. Nagpur will also have a centre by the year-end to become first city of Maharashtra to have such a facility.

‘Dialogue in the Dark’ puts people in everyday situations like crossing the road, or going to super markets, or a party with friends at a hotel or a lounge,

but in total darkness.

“It is to awaken the sense and deepen self-awareness about the blind people,” said Gurpreet Singh Saluja, owner of one such centre in Raipur.

Saluja took this scribe for a feel of the world of the visually-impaired with a 45-minute tour in his Raipur centre.

On entry, people are asked to put all their belongings including cell phone and wallet in a drawer. They are then provided a stick used by the blind and the tour begins with a completely dark room. One is totally on one’s own for the next 45 minutes in darkness and the only instrument to guide is the walking stick.

“People usually take almost five minutes to adjust to the darkness until they are guided by a voice,” one of the group members said.

One is told to take support of the walls in the room as the voice guides one to further directions. “A basket of vegetables and fruits is kept on one side of the room and people are asked to identify it,” Saluja said. This scribe could identify a potato, an apple and an onion when the next command asked to search a bench nearby and sit on it. It is



The team members of Dialogue in the Dark, Raipur with Gurpreet.

difficult to find the bench in darkness but the real story starts when one finds it.

There was sound of children

playing around, birds and water falling from some height. It is akin to the atmosphere in a park.

“We experience a lot of things

the group. The life of visually-impaired people then rolls out for the participants as they are asked to do all the activities that the blind do everyday including playing blind cricket.

“Cricket takes an unusually difficult form when one is asked to hit the ball without even seeing it. Just a game of six balls with the team members challenges one’s senses in the dark. That is the basic purpose of this concept. Making people aware of the difficulties faced by the blind in normal world,” Phillippe added.

When the participants are brought out of the room, in sunlight, it takes them a considerably long time to adjust to the light. As one enjoys the bright light it also makes one ponder over the horror experience blind people go through every second in their life, without any colour or light. “This unique concept is creating good awareness among people about how we blind live our life. People think that blind can work easily as it is their daily routine but we know how we manage various situation. It is not so easy to live with one of your organs not working,” Phillippe delved into the concept’s purpose. Doesn’t he want to see the real world, full of colours?

“We feel how wonderful it would have been if we were able to see. But then I tell myself to get back to the world which God has given to us. I feel one day I will be able to see this colourful world,” Phillippe stated.

The blindness might have deprived him of beautiful world, but Phillippe was still thankful to God for giving him power to use his other sense organs.

“I agree that God has not given us one organ but I am still thankful to him for giving me birth and other four sense organs through which I am able to live my life. I am happy with what I am having,”

Saluja said this is wonderful concept and experience gives people a memory of a lifetime. “It gives a real-time experience of how life would be without vision. I feel proud to be with these guys and centre. Everyday I meet new people and it’s an honour to tell the visitors about this concept,” he said.

Saluja said the German concept has attracted many people and they are planning to bring this concept to Nagpur. “It will take some time but hopefully we will open our centre by the year-end,” he said.

The 45-minute tour is really a lifechanger for the visitors. It changes mindset and it changes the emotion too toward the blind.

Sai takes charge as Chairman of National ST Commission



BJP ST Cell National President Ramvihar Netam extended his best wishes by gifting Nandkumar Sai with traditional bow and arrow on the occasion.

■ Staff Reporter

RAIPUR, Feb 28

FORMER Member of Parliament and senior Bharatiya Janata Party leader Nandkumar Sai on Tuesday

took oath of office as Chairman of National Scheduled Tribe Commission.

BJP State President Dharamlal Kaushik while congratulating Sai said he will work for the welfare

of banwasi (tribal) community.

Speaking on the occasion Nandkumar Sai during his tenure as Chairman of National ST Commission, he will try his level best to work in the interest of tribal population residing in far-flung areas of the country.

He said he will ensure that they get the benefit of their constitutional rights. He will also work on the lines where he could ensure the socio-economic development of tribal population in the country.

Present during the oath taking ceremony were BJP ST Cell National President Ramvihar Netam and large number of well-wishers. National General Secretary Saroj Pandey, Union Minister of State Vishnudeo Sai, MP Dinesh Kashyap, MP Vikram Usendi, MP Kamalbhan Singh and large number of senior party leaders and office-bearers extended their best wishes to Sai.

Amir Hashmi awarded for short film ‘Mirror’



■ Staff Reporter

RAIPUR, Feb 28

MINISTRY of Information and Broadcasting, Government of India has awarded Amir Hashmi of Chhattisgarh for short film titled ‘Mirror’, based on Swachh Bharat Mission.

The film was screened in Swachh Bharat short film fest at Delhi, which was organised by the said ministry and National Film Development Corporation.

The duration of the short film is five minutes.

Kumhari wing of Shri Rawatpura Group celebrates annual function

■ Business Reporter

BHILAI, Feb 28

THE Kumhari wing of Shri Rawatpura Sarkar Group of Institutes celebrated its annual function titled ‘Re-incarnation-2017’ in a grand manner at Nehru Cultural House, Sector-1, Bhilai on Tuesday. Dr Bholendra Sarraf, Chairman, Pharmacy Council of India graced the occasion as chief guest and Executive Director of Shri Rawatpura Sarkar Group of Institutes, SS Verma presided over the program, while Professor, Dr Swarnalata Sarraf and Maya Bariyar, Assistant Commissioner of Tribal cast department were invited as the special invitees.

At the outset, programme commenced with lighting of ceremonial lamp at the hands of invited dignitaries followed by Saraswati Vandana presented by the students. Later, the scintillating cultural programs including group dance, folk dance,



Students from Shri Rawatpura Sarkar Group of Institutes presenting group dance.

bhangra, brake dance etc enthralled the audience, assembled in the function.

Thereafter, the ramp show depicting the tradition, dressing and cultural of different regions mesmerized the spectators. All the students, participated in cultural events were awarded with citations and mementos. Chief guest, in his address pointed that the education has its significant role in the development of a society

and nation and it also transforms a youth into a good civilian.

Speaking on the occasion Executive Director, SS Verma threw light on the development and future aspects of the college. He also extended his best wishes to the students for their bright future. Also present on the occasion were Director, SK Bharna, Technical Director, Dr Abdul Sattaar and Principal of Pharmacy department, Pranita Kashyap.

Judicial employee given farewell, but not pending dues

A judicial employee told this newspaper that Mishra could not get the dues because the post of accountant remained vacant after the person working on the post left it due to promotion



P K Mishra (left) & M A Qureshi

Qureshi on their retirement from service on Tuesday. District and Sessions Judge, Raipur, RK Rath and other judges graced the programme held in the court premises. The district judge presented shawl and ‘Shrifal’ to the two outgoing judicial employees. Both of them retired from Reader Grade-1 post.

On being given the opportunity to express his views formally, PK Mishra said that he felt very sad on the day as in sheer contrast of the tradition of the court establishment in Raipur, he was not paid his dues on the day he was being accorded farewell. He blamed that it

was negligence or lethargy somewhere and also said that it must be ensured that no other judicial employee goes through such experience.

District and Sessions Judge, Raipur, RK Rath said on the occasion that the circumstances which caused the deprival must be examined and it must be ensured that it does not happen again.

Raipur District Judicial Employees Association President Yudheshwar Singh Thakur and other office bearers were present on the occasion.

A judicial employee told this newspaper that Mishra could not get the dues because the post of accountant remained vacant after the person working on the post left it due to promotion. The association president Thakur said that even while lacking the services of accountant the process for payment of dues to Mishra was done, but it is due to objection related to pay fixation the payment of dues could not be done today. Thakur said that Mishra will be paid his dues very soon.

Chief Secy approves Rs 1,483 cr for new health projects

RAIPUR, Feb 28

CHIEF Secretary Vivek Dhand taking initiative to better the medical facilities in the state has approved Rs 1,483 cr for new health projects for year 2017-18. The decision was taken during the state health committee annual meeting organised under National Health Mission here. Chief Secretary during meet laid emphasis on to upgrade medical services in Bastar region by making recruitment of staff nurses and lab technician in various hospitals.

Instructing the officials Chief Secretary



Chief Secretary Vivek Dhand presiding over the meeting at Mahanadi Bhawan.

Vivek Dhand said focus should be on to better medical facilities in the state by recruiting doctors, health officer staff nurses, lab technician, LHV and ANM on the various

vacant posts in the various hospital and primary health centers in the state.

He also called on the officials be focus on project under taken in the Janni Suraksha Yojana which includes pulse polio, vaccination and use iodine salt. He laid his emphasis to better medical facilities in Bastar region by making appointment on vacant post in various hospitals and promote different national health schemes in the state.

Present during the meeting were Sonmoni Bohra, Richa Sharma, Ashish Bhatt, Dr Rohit Yadav, Anil Rai, R Prassana and other senior officials of health department.



Student of The Institute of Chartered Account of India (Chattisgarh) meeting with Income Tax Commissioner K C Ghumaria during their educational visit at the office. The commissioner explained the students regarding departmental functioning and tax laws. Also present during the occasion were Joint Income Tax Commissioners D K Jain and Shabana Parvin, Deputy Income Tax Commissioners Anubha Goyal and Rishii Menon and others.